

Nation



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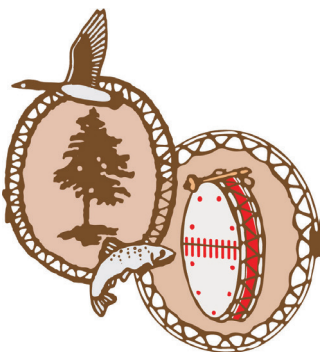
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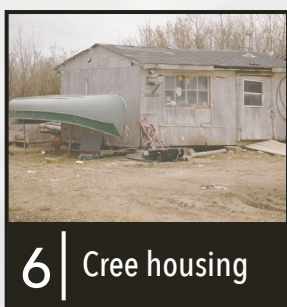


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CONTENTS



EDITORIAL

Our buddy Gord 4

NEWS

Inquiry answers 5

Taking ownership 6

IN BRIEF

9

FEATURES

Lessons from the grandmothers 10

Witnessing horror 16

Reunited 20

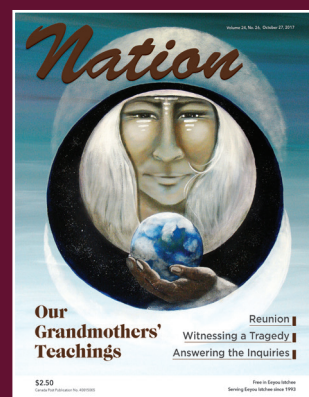
Parsing the payout 22

REZ NOTES

Scaredy cat 25

UTNS

Reach for the stars 26



Gookumnuch Illustration
Image provided by
Cree Women of Eeyou
Istchee Association (CWELA)

Our buddy Gord

by Dan Isaac



I got out of bed this morning about a quarter after nine and like the rest of Canada, I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Tragically Hip frontman Gord Downie. And while I can't profess to have known the man, it was like I had lost a friend. We all did. Justin Trudeau put it best in his tearful goodbye to "Our buddy, Gord."

Gord's love for Canada was palpable. He was a patriot. He loved every inch of this country, from the Big Smoke to the smallest unknown hole-in-the-wall town. He loved the Al Purdys and Bliss Carmens, the Trudeaus and Barilkos. I've heard his music and poetry described as the most beautiful, elegant Canadiana – in a can. I tend to agree. He's the reason I know that Bobcaygeon is a community in eastern Ontario, and not just some obscure lyric in a Hip song.

But even in his unconditional love for this country now known as Canada, his patriotism wasn't blind. He believed the country he loved could be better – had to be better, for everyone.

Since his terminal brain cancer diagnosis was made public in May 2016, Downie had dedicated himself to reconciliation. The Hip's final tour culminated in a performance, watched live by a third of Canada on the CBC, where he called out the Prime Minister and the rest of Canada to address the inequity faced by Indigenous people.

After the final performance of the Man Machine Poem tour, he even spent some time in James Bay and snapped selfies with Cree fans.

Through the Wenjack Foundation, Downie sought to reconcile the idea of Canada with the machine of Canada. He was even recognized by the Assembly of First Nations, becoming a fixture at their annual meetings, and was honoured with an Indigenous name, Wicapi Omani ("Walks With The Stars" in the Lakota language).

He never had to do any of it. He wasn't born an Indigenous person, never faced the institutionalized or casual racism that we do, but he saw it and chose to devote much of his final chapter to making a difference.

I leave you with his words from the Secret Path website. "We are not the country we thought we were. History will be re-written. We are all accountable... We weren't taught it; it was hardly ever mentioned.

"All of those governments, and all of those churches, for all of those years, misused themselves. They hurt many children. They broke up many families. They erased entire communities. It will take seven generations to fix this. Seven... We are not the country we think we are."

And an excerpt from "Mystery," by Wicapi Omani:

We've got "world enough and time"

And "wither youth" comes or goes

I hope you'll always think of me as "mine"

and not one of those.

Inquiry answers

by Ben Powless

Crees briefed on ongoing provincial and federal inquiries

About 50 people gathered in Val-d'Or October 5 for an information session with the Cree Nation Government and representatives of both the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and the Public Inquiry Commission on relations between Indigenous Peoples and certain public services in Quebec (CERP for its French acronym).

According to Melissa Saganash, the Director of Cree-Quebec Relations, many people were confused about the difference between the inquiries, as well as who can participate.

"Both were launched around the same time, the time frame is similar, and the mandate is similar but not the same," said Saganash. "People were thinking that both inquiries were only

agreed to investigate wider issues of racism in a number of public services, including the police.

That commission has hearings scheduled throughout October, and is to complete its work by the end of November 2018.

The MMIWG Inquiry began its own community visits and hearings this summer, with a mission to try to understand and make recommendations dealing with systemic violence against Indigenous women and girls across Canada. It began work in September 2016, after years of advocacy from Indigenous organizations.

That inquiry is scheduled to return to Maliotenam, near Sept-Îles, in mid-November for further hearings. Its work will also wrap up by the end of 2018.

tives from the MMIWG Inquiry, they too shed some light on who they were in terms of their consultations and the distinctions between the two commissions."

Bosum pressed the need for adequate housing, particularly for women and their families.

"There's no question that unless we deal with housing, until we can accommodate women and families dealing with these issues, the problem will continue to arise," he said. "There's been a lack of intention for both governments – they seem to be tossing the issue back and forth, nobody wants to assume any responsibility."

The Grand Chief noted that the Crees have so far had good relationship with the CERP commission. He says that Commissioner Viens understands the reality of Indigenous communities and is focused on solutions.

Saganash said she was hopeful that education was now on the minds of MMIWG Inquiry members after the session. Grand Chief Bosum is hopeful the CERP will encourage public awareness and education for those that provide services to Indigenous Peoples.

But for that to happen, he says people need to come out and share their stories, so they know what's actually happening in both urban areas and Indigenous communities.

"There's no question that unless we deal with housing, until we can accommodate women and families dealing with these issues, the problem will continue to arise"

- Grand Chief Abel Bosum

for women – but the provincial one is for men and women, and targets six different public services."

The CERP came into existence after the widespread allegations of police abuse in Val-d'Or in 2015. After significant pressure, the province finally

Newly elected Grand Chief Abel Bosum was one of the dozens in attendance. "I thought it went very well, I thought the CERP with Commissioner Jacques Viens and his group did an excellent job," said Bosum. "I was equally happy there were representa-

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Public notice

Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

2018-2023 INTEGRATED TACTICAL FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANS

From October 23 to December 7, 2017 the Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs is organizing a public consultation on the 2018-2023 Integrated Tactical Forest Management Plans (ITFMPs) covering public territory in the Nord-du-Québec region and is inviting the public to share its concerns in this respect.

The ITFMPs present the general orientations that structure forest management strategies. The MFFP will hold information sessions during which a representative will present the plans and answer questions.

SCHEDULE OF CONSULTATION MEETINGS		
DEVELOPMENT UNIT	DATE and TIME	PLACE
8751, 8762, 8763 and 8764	October 31, 2017, from noon to 1 p.m.	Lebel-sur-Quévillon: room No. 6, City Hall (500, place Quévillon)
8551 and 8562	October 30, 2017, from noon to 1 p.m.	Villebois: council chamber (3897, rue de l'Église)
8652, 8663, 8664, 8665 and 8666	November 14, 2017, from noon to 1 p.m.	Matagami: conference room of the Eeyou Istchee James Bay Regional Government (110, boulevard Matagami)
2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665 and 2666	October 26, 2017, from noon to 1 p.m.	Chibougamau: council chamber, City Hall (650, 3 ^e Rue)

You can consult the ITFMPs throughout the consultation and submit comments on the MFFP website (<http://www.mffp.gouv.qc.ca/forets/consultation-amenagement.jsp>) or at the offices of the MFFP during business hours.

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IMPORTANT: To be informed of the MFFP's forthcoming public consultations in the Nord-du-Québec region, please contact christine.morin@mffp.gouv.qc.ca and indicate "Request to register on the email list" in the subject line of your email.



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Blacksmith camp
burnt down

A camp at Wilson Lake that was developed over decades was burnt down in a suspected case of arson sometime between October 1-3. Sam Blacksmith had built the camp with his friends and brothers over the course of 20 years. The camp included two cabins, one shed and a teepee.

In addition to arson, Blacksmith's chainsaw, brushcutters and generator were stolen. "Yesterday when we went to the camp he tried to put some humour in it. He says, 'All I'm left with is a toilet and one toilet paper roll,'" wrote Blacksmith's son Donovan in a Facebook post. Sam laughed "and then start[ed] crying, all the hard work he did to build his camp with his bare hands."

But the community of Waswanipi reacted quickly. A GoFundMe page quickly raised \$5,000 to help rebuild the camp. Meanwhile, Blacksmith's neighbours James Dixon and his daughter gifted Sam a new chainsaw.

To donate: www.gofundme.com/rebuilding-wilson

Quebec too slow

Seven Inuit and First Nations groups signed a cooperative wildlife management agreement October 17 to help ensure caribou will be around for future generations. They will present the agreement to provincial and federal governments.

The George River and Leaf River herds had a combined population of around 1.3 million in the late 1990s, but today they number only 209,000. Especially hard hit was the George River herd, which went from 770,000 in 1993 to 9,000 in 2016.

"Inuit, Cree, Innu, Métis and Naskapi: we're different as Indigenous people but we all have the caribou in common," said Makivik Executive Vice-President Adamie Delisle Alaku. "It's been our food, our shelter, our clothing, our culture, our legends."

Quebec will ban sport hunting of the Leaf River herd next year. A ban already exists for the George River herd.

The MMIWG inquiry soldiers on

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) has lost two more staff members. On the same day that lead lawyer Susan Vella and research director Aimeé Craft announced they'd be stepping down, the inquiry

appointed Debbie Reid as its new Executive Director. The position had been vacant since July 21.

Despite the new resignation and an open letter penned to the prime minister calling for a hard reset of the proceedings, the Inquiry went ahead with hearings

in Winnipeg the week of October 16.

During her testimony, family member Alaya McIvor told commissioner Michèle Audette, "You failed us. You really failed drastically."

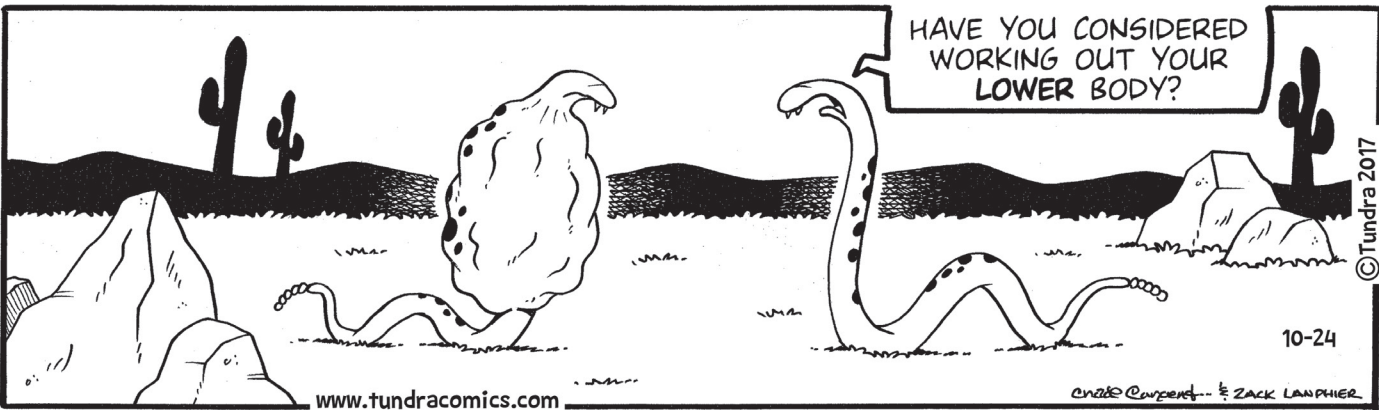
The Inquiry requested a two-year extension of its mandate in September.



Coon Come
to be honoured

Former Cree Grand Chief Mathew Coon Come will receive the Canadian Public Policy Forum's Marcel Côté Award of Indigenous Leadership in November. Coon Come is to be recognized for his leadership of and advocacy for the Crees of Eeyou Istchee and of Indigenous Canada generally. In particular, his work on community and economic development, human rights and self-determination will be recognized.

Two others, Nadine St-Louis, the founder and Executive Director of Sacred Fire Productions, and Gabriel Bran Lopez, founder and President of Youth Fusion, will also be honoured. The ceremony will be held at Montreal's Chamber of Commerce November 7. The Nation extends its congratulations to the former Grand Chief as well as St-Louis and Lopez for their important work and achievements.



lessons from our grandmothers

The Gookumnouch Council shares life teachings

by Darya Marchenkova | Photo's provided
by Gaston Cooper and the Cree Women
of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA)



“To teach traditional life teachings and to
remind us that culture is **our medicine**.”

— Nellie Bearskin House

“The grandmothers have to be in place now to guide the people, to acknowledge again who they are”

— Irene Bearskin House

When Irene Bearskin House was 10 years old, she learned in school that the fiddle wasn't an instrument from her own culture. She became curious: what was played in Cree culture? Bearskin House asked one of her grandmothers, a woman who helped raise her after her

parents died, “What did we use? Did we dance or something?”

But her grandmother didn't answer her. Bearskin House persisted for a year, asking again and again, until her grandmother finally said, “Okay, my granddaughter. We had the drum. And we had the dance.”

Then she stood up in her skirt and began to dance, holding a blanket across her arms and chest like a shawl and moving her feet up and down.

“When she stood to dance, I'll never forget her face,” Bearskin House recalled. She had never seen her grandmother smile and laugh like that.

As Bearskin House grew older, she studied history and realized how frightened her grandmother's generation must have been when they were told that their traditional practices and ceremonies were evil. “That's how I learned how deep that was, that fear,” she observed.

Lessons like this led Bearskin House to join the Gookumnouch Council, the group of grandmothers who advise and guide the work of the Cree Women of Eeyou Itch'ee Association. “The grandmothers have to be in place now to guide the people, to acknowledge again who they are,” she said.



Born in a traditional dwelling close to La Grande-3, Bearskin House was raised on the land for the first seven years of her life. When her parents died in a plane crash, she was taken to residential school. “My life got a little messed up as a teenager and a young adult,” she acknowledged. The first

seven years was what kept me grounded and strong.”

In her late 30s, she started to reflect on her past. She went back to her birthplace and interviewed people there. “I had to do research on myself,” Bearskin House explained. The land, the people and the practices all came back to her. “All that I witnessed, what I heard, all

the life out there those 10 months of the year was instilled in me.”

The Gookumnouch Council held its first gathering in Chisasibi in March 2016. People travelled from across Eeyou Itch'ee to share and listen to what Bearskin House and others call life teachings. A caribou ceremony and a ritual for a young woman at their First

Moon time were conducted. The young woman wore a beaded veil and special regalia. Participants learned about the meaning of the denim skirt, its ribbons and colours.

A book was written to summarize the teachings shared at the first gathering. Bearskin House was asked to write the introduction. “Our ancestors

guided us, Nishiyuu, through our kuu-kuminuuch that a sacred gathering is to happen...to teach traditional life teachings and to remind us that culture is our medicine,” she wrote.

A second gathering was held this September in Waswanipi.

“Every one of us has to go through these teachings in order to understand

“Where we are as Crees, I saw the social issues escalating. I saw suicide as a big, big crisis. I saw what was happening with the youth and the children. I always had the question: where are we going?”

— Nellie Bearskin House

our place in this life,” Bearskin House noted. “I guess that’s why our people have become so confused, especially the younger generation. A lot of that has been missing, that understanding of those rites of passage.”

Nellie Bearskin House, Irene’s older sister, provides support to the Gookumnouch Council as an honorary Elder. “Where we are as Crees, I saw the social issues escalating,” she said. “I saw suicide as a big, big crisis. I saw what was happening with the youth and

the children. I always had the question: where are we going?”

Nellie saw the Gookumnouch Council as a place where she could work on these issues, teaching about colonization and oppression.

The booklet of teachings from the first gathering reads: “From the general impacts of residential school to denying women the right to accomplish their role, our people have suffered much from intergenerational trauma, thus dis-

turbing the sacred balance found within the core of every being.”

Nellie and Irene’s mother went to residential school, but she returned to live on the land afterward. Nellie said her mother’s generation could “reprogram themselves,” drawing on what they had learned as children. “It’s us who didn’t go back to reprogram ourselves. We learned the ways of the white people so well. When we came back, we had 9-to-5 jobs,” Nellie says. “We only went camping.”

Nancy Danyluk is a member of the Gookumnouch Council. She lived with her grandmother when she was young, and remembers her teachings. She would go out on the land with her parents as a child, and after leaving home at 18, she missed those experiences.

As a child, Danyluk didn’t always believe what her grandmother said. Her grandmother would speak to her about white society and what would happen to Crees.

“All the things that she told me – they’re happening today,” Danyluk said. “They say that Native people are just going to be like white society in the future, but you want to pass on the teachings that your grandparents and parents taught you.”

People have a hard time understanding, she observes. “They think that they need to go back to the past and live in that way. That’s not true. You take the present and the past and you combine it into one.”

*“People have such a hard time understanding: they think that they need to go back to the past and live in that way. **That’s not true.** You take the present and the past and you combine it into one”*

– Nancy Danyluk



Two Native men from Canada
tell their stories of the
mass shooting in Las Vegas

“Are those people dead?”

Jode Kechego asked a security guard October 1 on the roof of the Mandalay Bay Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas after Nevada resident Stephen Paddock opened fire on a country music festival, killing 58 people and wounding 546 more.

Kechego was numb with disbelief after witnessing the tragedy. A member of Chippewa First Nation in Ontario, he was on

the roof taking pictures of the Vegas skyline that night when the bullets began to rain down on the crowd. It wasn't until later that evening Kechego realized he'd just witnessed the deadliest mass shooting in modern US history.

The echoes and bursts of rifle fire were bouncing off surrounding buildings – then the noise came to a halt. Everyone below ran to the centre of the Route 91 Harvest venue, but after a pause the shots rang out again while people fell running for cover.

The screams of horror reached Kechego back on the roof. Finally, police sirens came faintly over blasts. “Stay put,

the shooter is in Mandalay Bay, only a few floors below you,” a friend cautioned Kechego through a text message.

The security guard then ordered Kechego to pack up his cameras and tripods and to reenter the building. The two of them ran back to the dining room on the hotel roof.

Yelling “Get down, get down, get down,” a SWAT team busted in and ordered the 80 people in the dining room to lay on the floor and put their hands up. The floor was on lockdown until 7:30 am the next morning.

On the ground, what sounded like fireworks had the audience applauding and singing, but that cheer left some people

WITNESSING HORROR

by Nick Wapachee

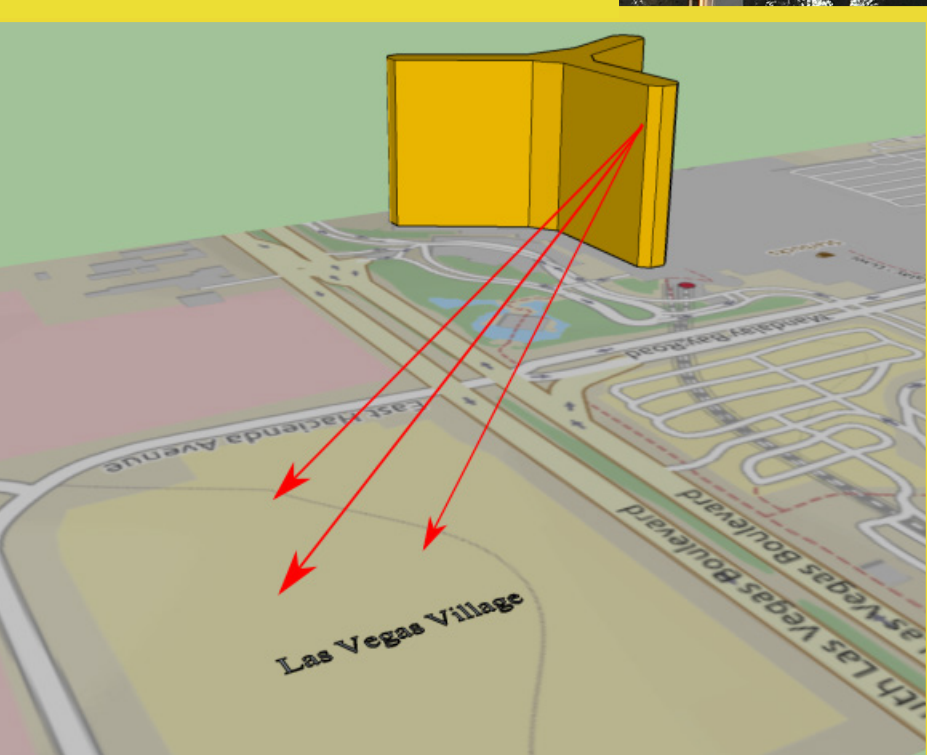


It wasn't until later that evening Kechego realized he'd just witness the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history from a “bird's-eye-view.”

confused. Jordan Bear, a Cree from Waskaganish, stood with his girlfriend next to the Neon Lounge, just metres away from the main stage. Those sounds became worrisome when flashing lights didn't meet the noise in the sky.

"Stay down, stay down," a spectator urged the crowd, just seconds after the first rounds hit. Bear knew those shots were coming from the sky as bullets bounced off the ground. He ran for cover near the lounge with his girlfriend. Bear could tell the shooter was reloading his gun, and that was a signal to run for his life. He and his girlfriend made what seemed like a long journey to the exit through the blood-soaked grounds, cries for help resonating in the background.

By the time they reached the rear wall of the venue, people were trampling each other in panic, trying to break down walls. Some were running to the McCarran International Airport for safety. Bear and his girlfriend made it back to their hotel at about 10:20 pm with bloodstains covering their shirts though neither was wounded. But they were numb with shock.



Bear and his girlfriend were supposed to come with friends from the Cree Nation who backed out at the last minute. He was relieved to know that some of his friends wouldn't be victims in the senseless tragedy. He messaged two other couples with them at the concert, discovering that they were safe in a restaurant during the lockdown. It took about a week for Bear to finally "shake things off" from the tragic event; his girlfriend had nightmares for four straight nights.

The next morning, Kechego went to retrieve his motorcycle near the concert venue, but police had blocked off the area as a crime scene. Trying again four days later, the hotel security guard recognized him from the roof. Both went to give the photographs he had taken that fateful night to the FBI and Las Vegas police. The pictures proved valuable as they were from the exact same angle of the shooter and are now part of the investigation.

Kechego, who has worked as a land claims negotiator and policy analyst for the Anishinabek Nation, had a lot on his mind after the shooting. He had moments of sorrow and felt the urge to cry, but he held back those tears for a while. He spoke to Gitche Manitou and asked to be with the people at the scene and to be with their families.

Kechego left Las Vegas for a ceremony of release with his friends at Black Mountain. There he cried for an hour. His remedy is simple, and that was to deal with the trauma right away, through ceremony.

THE AFTERMATH

Reunited

After 12 years in Egypt, daughters come home with their Mississauga mother

by Ben Powless

A Mississauga woman's years-long journey to bring her daughters home from Egypt is finally over.



Candy Gunner landed in Montreal October 2 with Fatma, 16, and Aisha, 13 – leaving only eight hours before an Egyptian court forbid their departure.

This was the positive resolution to a 12-year nightmare as her daughters lived with their father in Ismailia, a city of 266,000 in northeastern Egypt. For the past year, Gunner has been in Egypt trying to bring her daughters home.

During that time, the girls had gone from their parents separating, to their father telling them their mother had passed away, to discovering that she was very much alive. In the end, they both decided to return to Canada with their mother.

In an interview with the James Bay Cree Communications Society (JBCCS), Gunner laid out the ordeal that she – and her daughters – endured over those 12 years.

She originally met her husband in Montreal. She decided she wanted to get married and have children with him after seeing that he came from a family-oriented, religious background. She wanted the best for Fatma and Aisha.

But things didn't work out that way.

Soon after their second child was born, her husband was deported from Canada. They moved to Egypt together,

where Gunner found a job as a teacher. Then she fell ill.

"I came back to Canada, and had to go back and forth to get treatment," she explained to JBCCS. "The marriage started to fail, things didn't work out."

She last lived there full-time between 2006-2008.

Gunner tried to return with the girls, but her husband wanted to keep them – and said that they would grow up in a caring family and learn a culture of positive teachings from Islam. She believed him, and thought they would be in good hands.

However, Gunner lost all contact with the children for three years. She found out her husband had married another woman when the girls' new stepmother reached out to her online. (Though Gunner and her husband haven't divorced, polygamy for men is legal in Egypt.)

She also discovered that the girls' father had told Fatma and Aisha that she had succumbed to disease – that they would never see their mother again.

But the girls were savvy, and found out online that their mother was still alive. Not only that, but they got in touch.

Gunner returned to Egypt and renewed her relationship with the girls. But the problems didn't stop.

There were stories of physical abuse and neglect. Aisha had heart problems, but her father wasn't providing appropriate care, according to Gunner.

Gunner wanted to explore her options. She talked to a lawyer. He said that Gunner had no rights over her children. She felt there was nothing she could do. Nor would she seek a divorce, since that might exclude any chance to visit her children.

In October 2016, Gunner again returned to see her daughters.

Fatma, the eldest, said she was fed up living with her father. "She asked, begged, to return to Canada. I said it would be difficult: if I lose the court case, I might lose them forever," Gunner explained.

These were serious risks, but her mind was made up.

Wandering through the streets, Gunner didn't know how to read the Arabic word for "lawyer". Instead, she and her daughters went looking for storefronts that had the universal symbol of justice – the scale.

The first few lawyers she found didn't speak any English at all. And even though her daughters could speak Arabic, they had no expertise in the legal jargon required to translate complicated proceedings.

Eventually she found one who spoke broken English.

At first, they tried to get the girls' grandmother to return their passports. They went to court, but the grandmother didn't appear. As a small victory, the courts granted the girls the right to seek Egyptian passports, but they abandoned that process after learning how difficult the process is there.

Instead, they decided to obtain Canadian travel documents. Because Fatma was already 16, she was able to get her own passport. Aisha's case would prove more difficult.

The court would issue a travel ban at 10 am, October 2. But Candy Gunner and her daughters had already left. Their flight home had departed at 2 am the same morning.

"I can't believe it. I left hell, you know? It was like prison," Fatma told the CBC after arriving at Montreal's Trudeau Airport that same day.

Hurley explained that the girls would be free now to travel anywhere else in the world, but may have problems if they were to return to Egypt.

Her daughters were in good spirits when reached by JBCCS on October 14. Fatma

"She asked, begged, to return to Canada. I said it would be difficult: if I lose the court case, I might lose them forever"

- Candy Gunner

In July, they hired John Hurley, a lawyer with the Montreal-based legal firm Gowling WLG. Hurley had initially been contacted by Grand Chief Abel Bosum, among others, who believed he might be able to help.

"I've never done work on this kind of case – it was quite unusual," said Hurley. "The case was taking place in Egypt, and I don't do family or immigration law."

There were a number of legal challenges. Additionally, Gunner was concerned for the safety of her children and surveillance by the girls' father. She also worried they could be abducted and taken to Saudi Arabia, where he was now living.

Gunner visited the Canadian embassy in Egypt, but was only provided a list of lawyers. "They didn't help me," Gunner said.

That changed when Grand Chief Bosum wrote to the Canadian ambassador asking for specific assistance. Suddenly, things were moving. They were now told they could apply for an emergency travel document from Global Affairs Canada, a government department that manages Canada's diplomatic and consular relations.

They got the document. They had a ticket out of the country. But there was one final problem: the girls' father's family had applied to Egyptian courts to have them placed under a travel ban, meaning they couldn't leave the country.

said she was "more than happy. Emotional. I don't know."

The girls say they don't remember ever having seen snow, but are excited about it.

Asked about their first impressions of Mississauga, the girls had a typical teenage response. "It's boring 'cause there's only houses. We're used to the city. It's a little bit boring because there's nobody out in the streets."

For the girls, there are plans to register for school in Chibougamau.

Gunner reiterated her appreciation to everyone who supported her and her daughters. "Words can't suffice how thankful and grateful we are. People I've never met before helped us – it's amazing," she told JBCCS.

"It's really important my daughters feel loved and welcomed, they've been neglected and abused and not cared for properly in Egypt. Showing them love and affection is the beginning of their healing journey. We have a long road ahead - all of us.

"Words can't suffice how thankful and grateful we are. People I've never met before helped us – it's amazing"

- Candy Gunner





Parsing the payout

A 60s Scoop survivor discusses Ottawa's compensation offer

by Amy German | Photos provided by Nakuset

"The government is really cheap! It's really surreal and really insulting, considering all of the things that Indigenous people have gone through."

Nakuset, the First Nations activist and Director of the Native Women's Shelter of Montreal, was speaking about the federal government's recently announced \$800 million compensation for survivors of the 60s Scoop.

Nakuset was separated from her mother as a young child. She and her sister Sonia were bounced around from relative to relative because their mother, an alcoholic and residential-school survivor, couldn't care for them. She then became one of the estimated 20,000 Aboriginal children who were taken from their communities and fostered or adopted out to primarily white families in Canada, the US or Western Europe in a practice called the 60s Scoop.

According to Nakuset there are major problems with the \$800 million payout. The first is that, last February, an Ontario

Superior Court judge in the original Ontario class-action lawsuit ruled that survivors of the 60s Scoop were entitled to significantly more.

"The government tries to pay us as little as possible," said Nakuset. "If I'm part of the 60s Scoop, my background is erased, I am no longer considered an Indian. In Ontario, the judge said they should be awarded the \$1.3 billion they are asking for."

Instead, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett announced that about 16,000 claimants could receive compensation up to a maximum \$50,000. It will be the actual claim is going to be the difficult part, according to Nakuset.

It is only those who were adopted out who are entitled to compensation, not the ones who spent their lives in foster care. Nakuset said the govern-

ment likely did this on purpose, in order to pit one against the other.

"My sister was in foster care and had it rough. She was bounced around and saw nothing good," said Nakuset.

And then there is that other elephant in the room – having to prove that you were actually part of the 60s Scoop. Nakuset says this will be significantly harder than first imagined.

they did was remove the children and place them elsewhere. Many were adopted out to the US. I know a lot of people in the States who are following this saying, 'I am from Canada but I've been living in the US all this time'," explained Nakuset.

While there may not have been documents relating to these adoptions, there were catalogues. This, Nakuset says, is how a Jewish family in Montreal, which tried to

It is only those who were adopted out who are entitled to compensation, not the ones who spent their lives in foster care.

With the residential-school system, there was a registry. With the 60s Scoop, Nakuset notes, the social workers in charge were not creating records for all of the removed children. While they frequently charged \$5000 to \$20,000 per child to adoptive families, social workers often skipped background checks to see if adopters had a history of pedophilia or child abuse.

"Those social workers weren't doing their jobs. All

erase her identity, adopted her. By no means, she says, is it accurate enough evidence that would hold up in court.

"[Child welfare activist] Cindy Blackstock said if you get \$25,000, it works out to \$2.53 per day – that is what it comes down to for your experience. The way they did the adoptions, they didn't do background checks. The faster you sent them out, the better. Get rid of them, get rid of them, get rid of them!"

Nakuset as a child



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Scaredy cat

by Sonny Orr



“And then her footprints in the snow slowly changed from human to wolf, one paw at time...”; “and from under the table just after sunset, the little man came out with bat-like wings and flew off out the window...”; “it was raining very hard as I drove down the road to the dump, that’s when I saw it, tall and hairy. Then it ran down the road, its large bare underfeet clearly visible as it trotted in front of me...”; “the mist on the river looked like a man standing there in his hunting coat and as we drove right through it with our freighter canoe, a chill passed through us...”; “the high-pitched yowling and screaming from the dark kitchen reminded us of mating minks as we looked around with lit candles to find the source of the screams at the fishing cabin deep in the woods...”; “its head reared from the tall waves of the bay and it looked like a long giant otter with a caribou head and small antlers...”; “the baby cried harder and harder at the old clinic and the cries came from the pitch-black dark basement...”; “a teacher got to know an old man as he passed by every day to chat. One day he came by and did the same thing. A few minutes later, the teacher discovered that the old man had passed away earlier...”; “on top of the cliff a perfectly smooth surface reminded him of a good place to land an aircraft and a nearby crevasse in the rock face had a nice trail that led deeper into the rock...”; “he ran from the crazed wild women, who brandished knives. His strength was heightened by fear as he climbed the steep cliff to get away and he dared not look back for fear of missing a step...”; “they kept returning night after night, loosening the tent ropes and getting braver and braver and getting closer and louder

each night. The father ran out and shot repeatedly into the night...”.
These dramatic endings to many stories told me of how the unknown can be downright terrifying. All stories are not so far back in history, as some people are still alive who experienced these scary moments. As the wind gusts increasingly stronger outside, the dark night blustering snow and ice pellets, these types of stories are common around All Hallows’ Eve, or simply Halloween. It’s hallowed because All Saints’ Day follows the last night of October, but not many people get spooked by holy saints. No, they get scared of the unknown and today’s catch phrase – the paranormal. Yes, unbeknownst to many who dare not to believe, the world of the unknown is a heck of a lot more interesting to discuss than your normal 9-to-5 lifestyle.
Before it was normal to scoff at the superstitious and laugh at their lack of believability. Where’s the evidence? Show me something that can be recorded. How about a picture that’s not out of focus? Today, nearly everyone has a camera tucked away in their smartphone and the visual evidence is mounting every day (or every spooky night). Now, it’s the same scoffing and ridicule because just about anyone over the age of three can Photoshop any

image imaginable. So, what’s there left to be afraid?
As for me, once a long time ago, when Hull was still Hull and Aylmer still Aylmer, I was invited to go out to a popular discotheque located in a former church. Some priests had dropped by the day before Good Friday and had an excommunication of the holy grounds and that evening, the party was in full swing. I wasn’t allowed in because of the strict dress code, so I ended up shooting pool and headed home on the last bus. The next morning, my landlady informed me that, at the stroke of midnight, all the doors of the discotheque slammed shut. A loud scream and putrid smell added to the fear that the patrons had as they tried to exit in complete darkness.
A short time later, the doors were released from the hellish grip of the unknown and a totally traumatized crowd emerged from the building, some crying and some with their hair turned white. Thank god for jeans. If it weren’t for jeans, I could’ve had the scare of my lifetime. Oh, well, with the way things are going, I’m pretty sure something else will pop up and scare everyone on the planet. Boooouhhouuwaawaaa!

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Under the Northern Sky Reach for **the stars**

by Xavier Kataquapit



The Cree of the James Bay coast have always turned to the sky for survival. Every fall we looked up from our blinds on the land to harvest migrating birds moving south for the winter. Our lives depended on the coming and going of the Niska (Canada goose), Way-way (snow geese), Shee-sheep (ducks) and many other smaller migrating birds. We honoured these creatures and thanked them for helping us survive.

My ancestors were not landlocked the way we are today. They had free range as nomads on the land and travelled at certain times of the year to hunt, trap and gather for survival. They did not see the world as we do today. To them the world was one and connected. They travelled on the land living with all the other creatures in a balanced way. They were out in the open in the muskeg, on the snow and ice and on the rivers and lakes. They saw the sky, land and water as a part of the whole.

Today, most of us rarely take the time to be out on the land or look up into the sky. We are indoors most of the time at some form of work, watching television or roaming our world on the internet with various devices. When my parents were alive they frequently frowned on our captivity by any media. They urged us to get outside, to venture out to our traditional lands. They taught us about surviving with very little on the land and to respect Mother Earth.

My ancestors spent a lot of time looking skyward when hunting and also at night to navigate their way on the great James Bay. My dad understood the stars and the heavenly bodies. Survival depended on knowing directions according to the moon, sun and stars. They understood how to read the sky and the land to forecast the

They did not see the world as we do today.
To them the world was **one and connected**.

weather and provide information on what was ahead.

I recall my dad noting what moon it was during the year to keep track of what the animals were doing and to know when the coldest periods took place. Out on the bay he could tell by the formation of clouds whether a storm was brewing and when it would be coming to us. All of these things my people learned through many generations and they did so because figuring out these signs contributed to their survival. They had to rely more on the natural world around them and they did so because they had a holistic view of their reality.

We spend most of our time in boxes and wrapped up with artificial images and media. I remember the look of awe and shock on the faces of visiting city people at the crystal clear lakes and rivers in the middle of the wilderness. The real world was actually shocking to them. City people I have taken out to witness the amazing northern lights and star-studded sky were dazzled by the experience and at times fearful of so much magic.

In my busy town-based life I spend a lot of time in the house. However, I try my best to get out on the land to sit by the campfire and look up at the majestic northern star lit sky. This summer, my friend Donald Elliott alerted me to a smartphone

app called "ISS Detector" that allowed me to follow the International Space Station as it orbited Earth. The app let me know when it would be passing over at night. Thanks to Donald I found myself outside under the stars with friends waiting for the space station to float over us. On clear nights I witnessed it lazily flying by as a very bright light in the sky. It is always exciting to see that light coming into view. I imagine the astronauts in the craft working away at experiments and glancing down at our wonderful little planet.

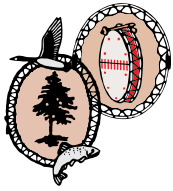
We are so fortunate to have life on our world that is just a random speck in the universe. I think of how incredible Mother Earth is and how good she is to us. It shames me that we humans have made such a mess of things. We are fighting wars, keeping people in poverty and oppressing them far too much. Many of us have forgotten our way and our place as human beings on our planet and we just don't see the connection so much anymore. It is time to take a minute and go outside to say hello to the stars.

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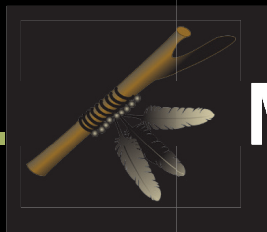
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